

Application Serial No. 10/686,373
Amendment dated September 14, 2005
Reply to Office Action of March 14, 2005

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 3B. This sheet, which includes Figs. 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, and 3C replaces the original sheet including Figs. 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, and 3C. In Fig. 3B, previously omitted element gasket 33 has been added.

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Remarks

Claims 1, 5, 10-12, 20, and 21 have been amended, the drawings have been amended, and the Specification has been amended. The allowability of claims 5, 10-12, 20, and 21 is noted with appreciation. Re-examination and reconsideration of the application, in view of the amendments above and the remarks below, are respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the drawings for not showing the gasket of claim 5. Fig. 3B has been amended to show the gasket 33, and a Corrected Drawing Sheet is submitted herewith. No new matter has been entered.

In addition, the Specification has been amended to refer to the gasket 33 of Fig. 3B. No new matter has been entered.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract as exceeding 150 words. A substitute Abstract is submitted herewith.

The Examiner rejected independent claim 1, and certain of the dependent claims, as being anticipated by Clayton U.S. Patent No. 3,892,417 and Lau U.S. Patent No. 5,740,592. Various others of the dependent claims were rejected on the basis of Clayton and Lau either alone or in combination with Tambussi U. S. Patent No.

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5,970,590 and/or Wiener U.S. Patent No. 6,438,249 and/or McClive U.S. Patent No. 4,930,197.

Clayton discloses a casket 5 having a shell gasket 10 which fits on the rim of the shell 6 providing a seal between the lids 7 and 8 and the shell 6. Lau discloses sealing strips 10 fixed to the respective top edges of the side walls 5 and end walls 6 of casket shell 2 to seal the spaces between the side wall panels 5a and 5b and to form a sturdy rim around the shell 2. Claim 1 has been amended to now recite a cover removably securable to the shell and concealing the edge when the lid is open, the cover being at least semi-rigid, the cover adapted to be removed from the shell edge for proper closing of the lid on the shell edge. As amended, the claim now clearly defines over Clayton and Lau, since Clayton's gasket and Lau's sealing strips are not removably secured to their respective shells, nor do they require removal from the shell edge for proper closing of the lid on the shell edge. Accordingly, claim 1, as amended, avoids the Examiner's §102(b) rejections on the basis of Clayton and Lau. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that there is no suggestion or motivation in Clayton or Lau for providing such a removably securable shell edge cover, and accordingly, an obviousness rejection of claim 1 on the basis thereof is not warranted. Furthermore, neither Tambussi nor Wiener nor McClive supply any of the deficiencies of Clayton and Lau. Accordingly,

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it is submitted that independent claim 1 is now clearly in a condition for allowance, as are all the claims which depend either directly or indirectly thereon, for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as others.

Lastly, the Examiner indicated that claims 5, 10-12, 20, and 21 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have so rewritten these claims and it is submitted that they are now clearly in a condition for allowance.

In view of the above, it is submitted that all of the claims pending in the application, namely claims 1-21, are now clearly in a condition for allowance. Re-examination of the application is respectfully requested, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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